

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT TIMOTHY HUTCHENS BY-LINER WASHINGTON STAR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, HEADED "BOMB SURVIVOR: CHILEAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE."

2. HE SITS IN THE STUDY OF A GEORGETOWN FRIEND.S HOUSE, PRESSING HIS EARS AS IF SOMEHOW IT WILL MAKE THE RINGING FROM THE EXPLOSION GO AWAY, TALKING THROUGH SOBS BECAUSE HE WANTS PEOPLE TO READ HOW HE FEELS ABOUT WHY HIS WIFE WAS KILLED AT THE AGE OF 25.

3. MICHAEL MOFFITT, ALSO ONLY 25, MARRIED LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS, ECONOMIST, CO-AUTHOR WITH HIS MURDERED FRIEND ORLANDO LETELIER, TALKS UNCONSOLABLY OF HOW HIS OWN LIFE IS ALREADY BEING DESTROYED. HE SOUNDS ALMOST APOLOGETIC ABOUT INDULGING HIMSELF A MOMENT OF GRIEF, FOR THE MESSAGE THAT MOFFITT WANTS TO SHOUT TO THOSE IN THE STREETS IS ONE OF INTERNATIONAL CONSCIENCE.

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4. STILL DRESSED IN THE GREEN SHIRT FROM HIS BRIEF STAY

AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL YESTERDAY, HIS OUTRAGE SEEMS INCREDIBLE IN ITS MEASURED EXPRESSION.

5. "I THINK THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE SHOULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF MY WIFE," HE SAYS. HE IS ALIVE BECAUSE HE WAS SITTING IN THE BACK SEAT OF THE FORMER CHILEAN AMBASSADOR'S CAR WHEN THE BOMB WENT OFF. SITTING NEXT TO LETELIER WAS RONNI MOFFITT, WHO WORKED WITH LETELIER AND HER HUSBAND AND THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES AND WHO DIED AT THE HOSPITAL.

6. CHILE HAS DISAVOWED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE BOMBING, BUT MOFFITT IS NOT CONVINCED THAT ITS RIGHTIST GOVERNMENT, WHICH IMPRISONED LETELIER AFTER A JUNTA (COUP) THREE YEARS AGO, DID NOT ORDER THE BOMBING. LETELIER HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF THE CHILEAN REGIME SINCE HIS RELEASE TWO YEARS AGO.

7. "I HOPE WE'LL NOW BE ABLE TO START A SERIOUS DISCUSSION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE GIVING ASSISTANCE TO ONE OF THE MOST BRUTAL REGIMES ON THIS EARTH," MOFFITT CONTINUES.

8. AS AIDERS, IF NOT ABETTORS, IN HIS WIFE'S DEATH, HE READS FROM THIS COUNTRY'S POSITION OF OPPOSING THE LEFTIST REGIME OF THE LATE PRESIDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE, WHOM LETELIER SERVED BOTH AS AMBASSADOR HERE AND AS FOREIGN MINISTER.

9. "THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE IN A LARGER SENSE," HE SAID, NAMING IN PARTICULAR PRESIDENT FORD, RICHARD NIXON, SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER, FORMER CIA DIRECTOR WILLIAM COLBY AND HAROLD GENEEN, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH CORP.

10. HE SINGLES OUT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATIONS LIKE ITT, WHICH ALONG WITH THE CIA WAS IMPLICATED IN EITHER THE OPPOSITION TO ALLENDE'S ELECTION IN 1970 OR HIS OVERTHROW IN 1973.

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11. ADMINISTRATIONS AS EARLY AS LYNDON JOHNSON'S OPPOSED ALLENDE, HE SAID. "THEY WERE HOSTILE EVEN BEFORE HE CAME INTO POWER. THEY OPPOSED, THEY OBSTRUCTED, THEY DRAGGED THEIR FEET AND DID ALMOST EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER SO THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO GOVERN."

12. HE ACCUSED THE CURRENT CHILEAN GOVERNMENT OF ELIMINATING ALL CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE COUNTRY AND SAID

LETELIER WAS KILLED BECAUSE HE PROTESTED.

13. "I BELIEVE THEY KILLED ORLANDO BECAUSE HE HAD WORKED TO RAISE THE AWARENESS OF WHAT WAS GOING ON. THEY HATED ORLANDO. I THINK HE HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN TOO MANY THINGS. SOMEONE DECIDED HE'D GONE TOO FAR."

14. MOFFITT SAID HE WORRIED ABOUT AN ATTEMPT ON LETELIER.S LIFE, ALTHOUGH HE REMEMBERS LETELIER HIMSELF ALWAYS GIVING SUCH TALK AN AIRY WAVE OF THE HAND, AND RECALLS NO TALK OF THREATS.

15. IN FACT, THE SUBJECT OF ASSASSINATION CAME UP DURING DINNER MONDAY NIGHT AT LETELIER.S HOUSE NEAR THE KENWOOD COUNTRY CLUB IN BETHESDA. THE MOFFITTS WERE THERE TO DISCUSS A PAPER THE TWO MEN WERE WRITING ON THE CHANGING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER AND SOMEHOW THE CONVERSATION SWITCHED TO AN ARGUMENT IN HIGH CHILEAN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES BETWEEN WHAT MOFFITT CALLED HARD-LINERS AND MODERATES.

16. THE HARD-LINERS, MOFFITT REMEMBERS LETELIER.S SAYING, WANTED HIM KILLED BECAUSE OF HIS OUTSPOKEN CRITICISM OF THE CHILEAN REGIME. LETELIER HAD BEEN STRIPPED OF HIS CHILEAN CITIZENSHIP THE WEEK BEFORE.

17. "THEY LIVE IN MORTAL FEAR OF TWO THINGS, FIRST, THE PRICE OF COPPER.S DROPPING, AND SECOND, A CUTOFF OF U.S. AID," MOFFITT SAID.

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18. THE MOFFITTS LEFT THAT NIGHT IN LETELIER.S CAR BECAUSE THEIR OWN HAD BROKEN DOWN. MOFFITT BELIEVES THAT WHEN THEY DROVE OUT TO THE SMALL, ONE-STORY HOUSE THEY HAD RENTED IN POTOMAC TWO MONTHS EARLIER, THE BOMB WAS ALREADY IN PLACE.

19. ON THE WAY BACK INTO WASHINGTON THE NEXT MORNING, THEY PICKED UP LETELIER AND WERE ON THEIR WAY TO THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES AT 1909 Q ST. NW, TO WHICH MOFFITT CAME TO WORK THREE YEARS AGO. HE HAD JUST GRADUATED FROM THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT CORTLAND, WHERE HE HAD MAJORED IN ECONOMICS.

20. THE BOMB WENT OFF AT SHERIDAN CIRCLE. "THERE WAS A BUZZ, THEN A FLASH," MOFFITT REMEMBERED IN DISMISSING

SPECULATION HE HAD HEARD THAT PERHAPS THE CAR WAS INTENTIONALLY CARRYING EXPLOSIVES.

21. MOFFITT HELPED HIS WIFE FROM THE CAR AND SHE TOOK A COUPLE OF STEPS BEFORE A DOCTOR WHO HAD BEEN DRIVING CLOSE BY TRIED GIVING HER FIRST AID. LETELIER, HIS BODY SEVERELY MUTILATED, DIED IMMEDIATELY.

22. "THERE.S NO DOUBT THE BOMB WAS SET FOR THE DRIVER.S SEAT," MOFFITT SAID.

23. "I WAS SITTING IN THE BACK AND THAT.S WHY I.M ALIVE," HE SAID.

24. A CALL CAME FROM A FRIEND IN NEW YORK THAT A NEWS BROADCAST HAD CARRIED ONLY CHILEAN AMBASSADOR MANUEL TRUCCO.S VIEWS OF THE BOMBING, AND MOFFITT SHOOK HIS HEAD. END TEXT. ROBINSON

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